

# Educational disabilities more likely with neonatal abstinence

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(HealthDay)—Children with a history of neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) are more likely to be referred for a disability evaluation and meet criteria for a disability, according to a study published in the September issue of *Pediatrics*.

Mary-Margaret A. Fill, M.D., from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, and colleagues matched infants who were born in Tennessee between 2008 and 2011 with a history of NAS to infants born during the same period without a history of NAS using Medicaid and birth certificate data (1,815 and 5,441 children, respectively). Data were linked to special education data during early childhood (ages 3 to 8 years) from the Tennessee Department of Education.

The researchers found that, compared to children without NAS, those with NAS were significantly more likely to be referred for a disability evaluation (19.3 versus 13.7 percent), meet criteria for a disability (15.6 versus 11.7 percent), and need classroom therapies or services (15.3 versus 11.4 percent). In multivariable analyses controlling for maternal tobacco use, maternal education status, birth weight, [gestational age](#), and/or [neonatal intensive care](#) unit admission, the findings were sustained.

"Results of this novel analysis linking health and education data revealed that children with a history of NAS were significantly more likely to have a subsequent educational disability," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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